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Interim Report 1-MDC-A-76

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION
20MM PLASTIC ROTATING BANDS

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October 1975

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Munitions Development and Engineering Directorate

U.S. ARMY ARMAMENT COMMAND
FRANKFORD ARSENAL
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19137

Interim Report 1-MDC-A-76

### PRELIMINARY EVALUATION 20MM PLASTIC ROTATING BANDS

AUTOMATIC CANNON TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM DA PROJECT NO. 1W662603AH78.01

BY

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Experimental exploratory evaluations of plastic bands applied to ammunition for the M139 gun consisted of obtaining and evaluating data provided by comparison firings between projectiles having either plastic or copper bands in two ballistic environments, the M139 and M61 gun barrels (Mann) over the temperature range -65°F, +70°F, and +160°F. In all, 120 projectiles were fired, 60 in each environment and 10 of each band material at each conditioning temperature. In addition, photographic observation of representative in-flight projectile firings provided visible evidence of band integrity, projectile stability, and band deformation.

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	•		Page
Abstract			
Introduction		 	3
Results		 	5
Conclusions		 	10
Recommendations		 	10
References		 	10
Distribution		 	28

#### LIST OF TABLES

Number	<u>Title</u>	Page
I	Description of Material	4
II .	Summary of Test Data	5
III	M139 Gun Ammunition Test Data	6
IV	M50 Series Ammunition Test Data	7

#### LIST OF FIGURES

Number	Page
1 M50 Type Projectile Body (M50 Series Ammunition)	. 11
2 HS HEI-T Type Projectile Body (M139 Gun Ammunition)	12
3 M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, -65°F, Photographs	13
4 M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, 70°F, Photographs	14
5 M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, 160°F, Photographs	15
6 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, -65°F, Photographs	16
7 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, -65°F, Photographs	17
8 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs	18
9 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs	19
10 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs	20
11 M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs	21
12 M139 Gun Ammo, Copper Band, -65°F, Photographs	22
13 M139 Gun Ammo, Copper Band, 70°F, Photographs	23
14 M139 Gun Ammo, Copper Band, 160°F, Photographs	24
15 M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, -650F, Photographs	25
16 M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs	26
17 M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs	27

#### INTRODUCTION

Plastic Rotating Bands have been developed and standardized for use by the U.S. Army on low performance fin stabilized projectiles. None have yet been standardized for high performance 20mm Automatic Cannon Ammunition such as the M50 Series. Current experimental investigations by the U.S. Air Force show promise to the extent of structural integrity of the band material and projectile bandseat geometry interface in M50 20mm projectiles. These encouraging results prompted an evaluation by the U.S. Army of the same design approach applied to 20mm ammunition for the M139 Hispano Suiza Gun. The basic differences between the performance levels as they affect band performance are:

- a) The M139 gun utilizes a constant twist rifled barrel as opposed to the gain twist of the barrels for M50 ammunition (M61 Gun) and a heavier and longer projectile than standard M50 ammunition.
- b) The bandseat of the M212A1 projectile (the TPT projectile for the M139 system) required modification to accommodate induction bonding of the band material, unmodified Nylon 12, to the projectile bandseat. (See Figure 1, Rev A SKMDC-A-3-75-001 and Figure 2, Rev A, SKMDC-A-3-75-002, for details of the designs of the M212A1 and M50 type projectiles respectively).

These experimental exploratory evaluations of plastic bands applied to ammunition for the M139 gun consisted of obtaining and evaluating data provided by comparison firings between projectiles having either plastic or copper bands in two ballistic environments, the M139 and M61 gun barrels (Mann) over the temperature range -65°F, +70°F, and +160°F. In all, 120 projectiles were fired, 60 in each environment and 10 of each band material at each conditioning temperature. In addition, photographic observation of representative in-flight projectile firings provided visible evidence of band integrity, projectile stability, and band deformation.

Evaluation data consisted of pressure and muzzle velocity measurements of all firings. Copper band projectiles provided a reference base for plastic band performance at the temperature extremes. The M50 projectile firings provided a reference base for plastic band performance in two ballistic environments, the M139 and M61 gun barrels.

All of the firings took place indoors. Velocity was calculated from time data derived from two lumeline screens spaced 50 feet apart with the first screen located 28 feet from the gun muzzle. Inflight projectile photographs were taken 35 feet from the muzzle. Cartridges were conditioned for two hours at the required temperature then fired within 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. The gun remained at ambient temperature.

Table I contains a descriptive summary of the test hardware. The base projectile for the M139 gun barrel tests was the M212Al TPT and for the 20mm or M50 Series ammunition, the M55A3 TP.

### TABLE I DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL

ITEM	M50 SERIES AMMUNITION	M139 GUN AMMUNITION
Cartridge Case	M103 Brass (1)	HS Steel (1)
Primer	M36A1E1	M115 (2)
Projectile	M55A3 (3)	M212A1 (3)
Propellant Type	WG 870	CR 8325.3
Propellant Charge	590 grs	835 grs
Bullet Pull	1000 lbs	1800 lbs
Mann Barrel	#150 (4)	#163HS820 (5)

#### Notes:

- 1. Cases were drilled for recording pressure with copper crusher gages.
- 2. Percussion primer containing 34 grs. of FA 959 mix.
- 3. Projectiles were crimped in cases and had either standard copper bands or glass filled Nylon 12 bands.
- 4. Gain twist.
- 5. Constant twist.

Plastic rotating bands offer potential for increasing barrel lifeup to two to two and one half times for equivalent ballistic systems and increasing muzzle velocity and muzzle velocity uniformity. State of the art developments project increasing barrel life by a factor of three and one half, lower costs, utilization of non-strategic, materials, and decreased drag. Derived improvements on one hand point (for equivalent ballistic systems) to lower pressures and/or decreased propellant charges. On the other hand pressures could be maintained and propellant charges increased with a derived increase in muzzle velocity.

An important consideration in utilization of plastic bands on high rate of reusage (high volume production) ammunition is cost. It has yet to be demonstrated that for the projected life of fielded systems or systems in development that cost controls exists which will provide a high degree of probability that unit cost for plastic banded projectiles will be equal to or less than copper banded projectiles.

4

#### RESULTS

Tables II through IV contain a tabulation of the test data. Table II contains a summary tabulation of the velocity and pressure data. High, low, spread, and average values are given for both plastic and copper banded projectiles.

Table III contains the detailed data for the M139 gun ammunition (M212A1 type) tests. Table IV contains the detailed data for the M50 Series ammunition firings together with data on the plastic band diameter dimension at  $-65^{\circ}F$  and  $160^{\circ}F$ .

The spread (range of variation) of the data recorded for the M139 gun ammunition appears to be greater than that for the M50 Series ammunition This is explained by noting that the basic design was that used for the M50 Series. This design had not gone through an improvement cycle for the M139 gun ammunition.

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF TEST DATA

	20MM	M139 GUN A	MMUNITI	ON		20MM M50	SERIES	
TEMP		STD) P.P.(cu)		STIC P.P.(cu)	CU(S'	TD) P.P.(cu)	PLAS M.V.	TIC P.P.(cu)
+70°F	3561	53,300	3521	48,500	3345	41,500	3323	42,200
EXTR.	86F/S	10,600psi	160F/S	14,700	59F/S	6,100	55F/S	6,500
High	3619	59,700	3589	55,500	3369	43,900	3355	46,200
Low	3533	49,100	3429	40,800	3310	37,800	3300	39,700
-65°F	3533	54,600	3558	57,800	3230	42,500	3189	40,100
EXTR.	55F/S	7,900psi	172F/S	21,200	103F/S	6,000	106F/S	12,000
High	3562	59,700	3643	68,600	3268	44,500	3241	45,900
Low	3507	51,800	3471	47,400	3165	38,500	3135	33,900
+160°F	3584	49,900	3561	46,720	3446	47,700	3392	47,000
EXTR.	40F/S	4,400psi	70F/S	4,000	30F/S	7,700	45F/S	4,600
High	3604	52,900	3601	48,500	3465	50,400	3413	49,100
Low	3564	48,500	3531	44,500	3435	42,700	3368	44,500

TABLE III

M139 GUN AMMUNITION TEST DATA

ROUND	TEMP.	PROJ. TYPE	M.V.	P.P. (cu)	REMARKS
946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955	+70 <sup>0</sup> F	Copper Rotating Band (Std.) AVG	3545 3540 3559 3574 3533- 3563 3560 3619+ 3577 3552	49,600 49,100 53,900 59,200 52,300 55,000 53,400 59,700 50,200 50,200	No unburnt pwd.
	e e	EXTREME	86 F/S	53,300 10,600psi	•
956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965	+70°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREME	3429- 3560 3515 3497 3487 3468 3553 3579 3530 3589+ 3521 160 F/S	40,800- 55,500 47,400 51,100 44,200 42,200 49,100 52,600 49,600 52,500 48,500 14,700 psi	No unburnt pwd.
966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974	-65 <sup>0</sup> F	Copper Rotating Band (Std.) AVG EXTREME	3545 3540 3545 3511 3507 3562 3529 3526 3543 3525 3533 55 F/S	51,800 55,500 56,600 51,800 54,500 59,700 54,500 52,900 53,900 55,000 7,900 psi	(See Temperature Note)

TABLE III (CONT)

#### M139 GUN AMMUNITION TEST DATA

ROUND	TEMP.	PROJ. TYPE	M.V.	P.P. (cu)	REMARKS
976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985	-65°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREME	3643 3482 3592 3558 3587 3496 3585 3471 3575 3594 3558 172 F/S	68,600 48,000 59,200 56,100 60,800 53,900 62,800 47,400 58,700 60,800 57,800 21,200 psi	(See Temperature Note)
986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995	+160 <sup>0</sup> F	Copper Rotating Band (Std.)  AVG EXTREME	3571 3591 3591 3571 3604 3564 3575 3601 3584 3589 3584 40 F/S	49,100 49,600 52,900 48,500 50,700 49,600 49,800 49,600 49,600 49,900 4,400 psi	(See Temperature Note)
996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005	+160°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREME	3549 3562 3553 3601 3531 3540 3543 3563 3584 3580 3561 70 F/S	46,300 45,700 47,800 48,500 46,000 44,500 46,600 46,800 46,800 46,500 46,720 4,000 psi	(See Temperature Note)

TABLE IV

M50 SERIES AMMUNITION TEST DATA

RD.	TEMP.	PROJ. TYPE	M.V.	P.P.(cu)	REMARKS
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.	+70°F	Copper Rotating Band (Std) AVG EXTRE	3339 3327 3366 3361 3316 3365 3310- 3369+ 3346 3352 3345	43,300 41,500 43,300 43,300 37,800- 39,100 39,700 43,900+ 40,300 42,700 41,500 6,100psi	No Unburnt Pwd.
11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.	+70°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREM	3308 3311 3355+ 3316 3300- 3355 3330 3302 3345 3311 3323	42,200 41,500 46,200+ 40,900 40,300 45,100 43,300 39,700- 42,700 40,300 42,200 6,500 psi	No Unburnt Pwd.
21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29.	-65°F	Copper Rotating Band (Std)  AVG EXTREME	3175 3253 3197 3225 3268+ 3267 3258 3258 3258 3231 3165- 3230 103 F/S	38,500- 43,900 39,700 42,700 44,500+ 44,200 43,900 44,500 43,300 39,700 42,500 6,000 psi	

TABLE IV (CONT)
M50 SERIES AMMUNITION TEST DATA

RD.	TEMP.	PROJ. TYPE	M.V.	P.P.(cu)	P.R.B. MEAS +70°	SUREMENT -65°
31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39.	<b>-</b> 65°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREME	3217 3230 3228 3190 3154 3241+ 3153 3184 3158 3135- 3189 106 F/S	43,100 42,700 45,900+ 40,200 33,900- 43,300 37,800 39,700 38,100 40,100 12,000psi	.8266 .8257 .8252 .8261 .8263 .8250 .8250 .8257	.8249 .8244 .8236 .8249 .8250 .8243 .8234 .8258 .8246 .8245
41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50.	+160°F	Copper Rotating Band (Std)  AVG EXTREME	3440 3443 3453 3435- 3444 3465+ 3445 3435 3460 3443 3446 30 F/S	45,500 49,600 49,500 47,700 44,400 50,400+ 47,400 42,700- 50,200 49,600 47,700 7,700psi	P.R.B. MEASU +700	REMENT +1600
51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59.	+160°F	Plastic Rotating Band AVG EXTREME	3368- 3390 3397 3392 3411 3388 3375 3390 3392 3413+ 3392 45 F/S	46,800 46,200 47,400 48,000 44,500- 47,400 45,600 47,400 48,000 49,100 4,600 psi	.8271 .8270 .8270 .8267 .8266 .8230 .8259 .8251 .8245	.8279 .8283 .8274 .8270 .8285 .8270 .8271 .8260 .8263 .8277

In flight photographs are reproduced in Figures 3 through 17. Figures 3 through 11 cover the M50 Series ammunition tests while Figures 12 through 17 cover the M139 gun ammunition tests. The first three figures of each set are those for copper banded projectile firings. The remainder are for plastic banded projectile firings.

#### CONCLUSIONS

These limited experimental tests confirm that plastic banded projectiles will remain structurally sound when fired in Mann barrels in the two selected ballistic environments.

Photographic evidence reveals trailing of the plastic band in both ballistic environments at  $70^{\circ}F$  and  $160^{\circ}F$ . Projectile stability does not appear to be degraded. In general, ballistic data satisfied existing specification.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

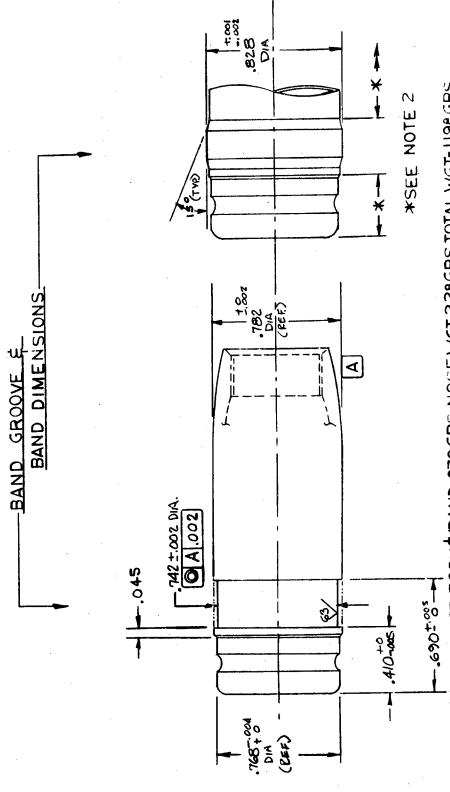
Single shot performance data, obtained by means of Mann barrel firings, need to be augmented by both single shot and automatic data obtained by firing tests in service guns, having various degrees of barrel wear and gun temperature environments.

Accelerated aging tests of the plastic band/projectile band seat interface are required to provide a reliable estimate of storage or service life.

Additional experimental data must be acquired for constant twist barrel firings of M50 type projectiles and upper limits for structural integrity in terms of pressure and velocity.

#### REFERENCES

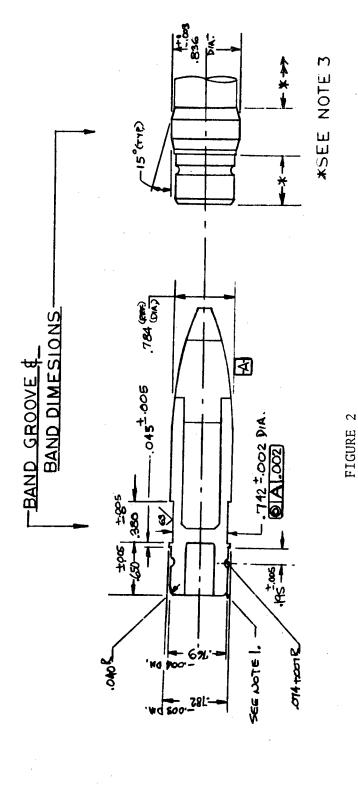
USAF Report AFATL-TR-74-106, "Plastic Band Development".



2.AFTER BANDAPPLICATION-REMOVÉ FLASHFROM BODY IN AREAS INDICATED. NOTE:-I.APPROX.WGT-BODY & BAND=970 GRS, NOSE WGT=228GRS, TOTAL WGT=1198GRS.

M50 Type Projectile Body (M50 Series Ammunition)

FIGURE 1

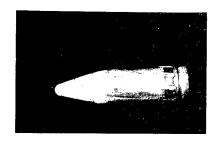


HS HEI-T Type Projectile Body (M139 Gun Ammunition)

3. AFTER BAND APPLICATION-REMOVE FLASH FROM BODY IN AREAS INDICATED. 2.APPROX.WGT,-BODY¢BAND•I3I4GRS,NOSEWGT•228GRS,TOTALWGT•I542GRS. NOTES:-I. MACHINE BACK EDGE FLAT.

# FIGURE 3 M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, -65°F, Photographs

RD 21



RD 22



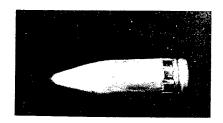


FIGURE 4

M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, 70°F, Photographs

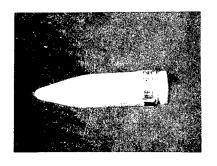
RD 1



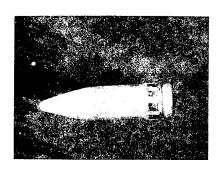


### FIGURE 5 M50 Series Ammo, Copper Band, 160°F, Photographs

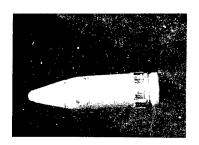
RD 42



RD 43



RD 45



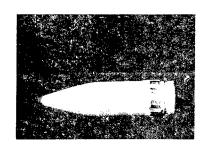
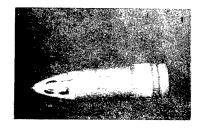
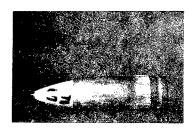
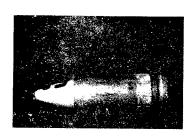


FIGURE 6
M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, -65°F, Photographs

RD 31 RD 32 RD 33

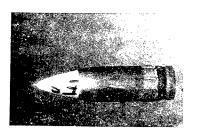






RD 34 RD 35 RD 37





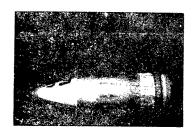


FIGURE 7

#### M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, -65°F, Photographs

RD 38



RD 39

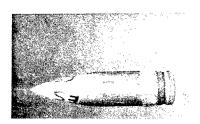
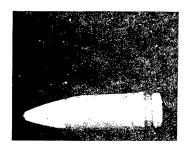


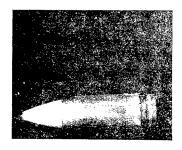


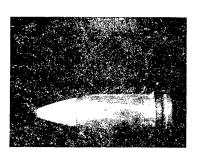
FIGURE 8

M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs

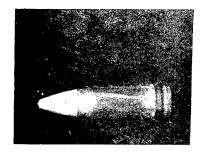
RD 11 RD 12 RD 13

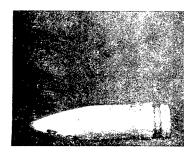






RD 14 RD 15 RD 16





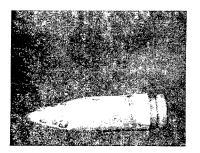
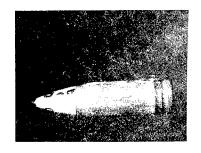
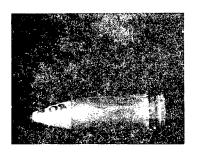


FIGURE 9

M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs

RD 17 RD 18





RD 19 RD 20

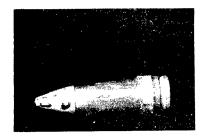
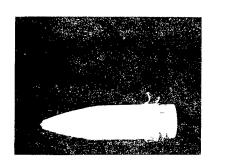
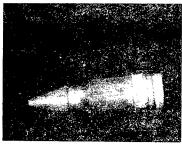


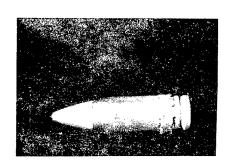


FIGURE 10
M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs

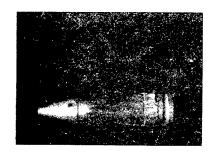
RD 51 RD 52 RD 53

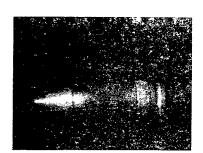






RD 54 RD 55 RD 56





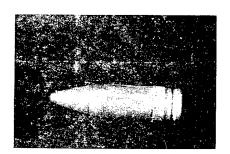
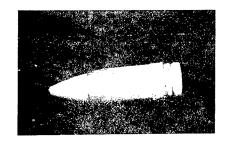
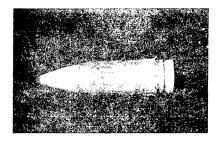


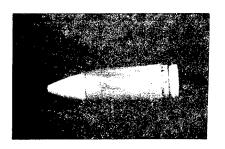
FIGURE 11
M50 Series Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs

RD 57 RD 58





RD 59 RD 60





#### FIGURE 12

M139 Gun Ammo, Copper Band,  $-65^{\text{O}}\text{F}$ , Photographs

RD 968 RD 970



RD 971 RD 972



# FIGURE 13 $$\rm M139~Gun~Ammo}$ , Copper Band, $70^{\rm O}\rm F$ , Photographs

RD 952

RD 953





RD 954

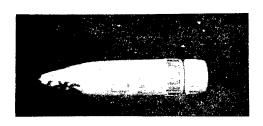
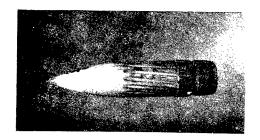


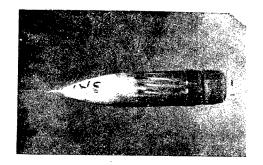


FIGURE 14  $$\rm M139~Gun~Ammo}$  , Copper Band,  $160^{\rm O}{\rm F}$  , Photographs

RD 988



RD 989



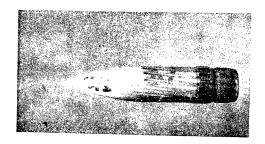


FIGURE 15
M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, -65°F, Photographs

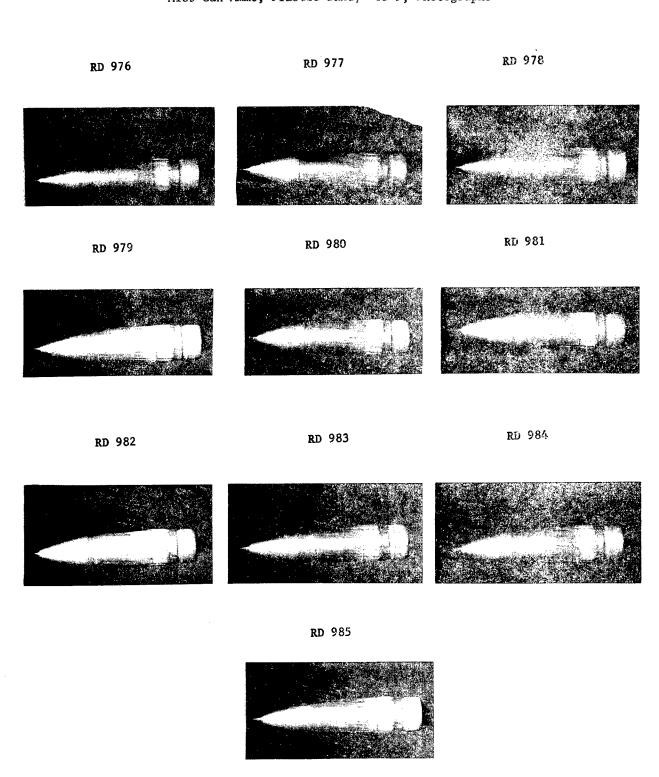


FIGURE 16
M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, 70°F, Photographs

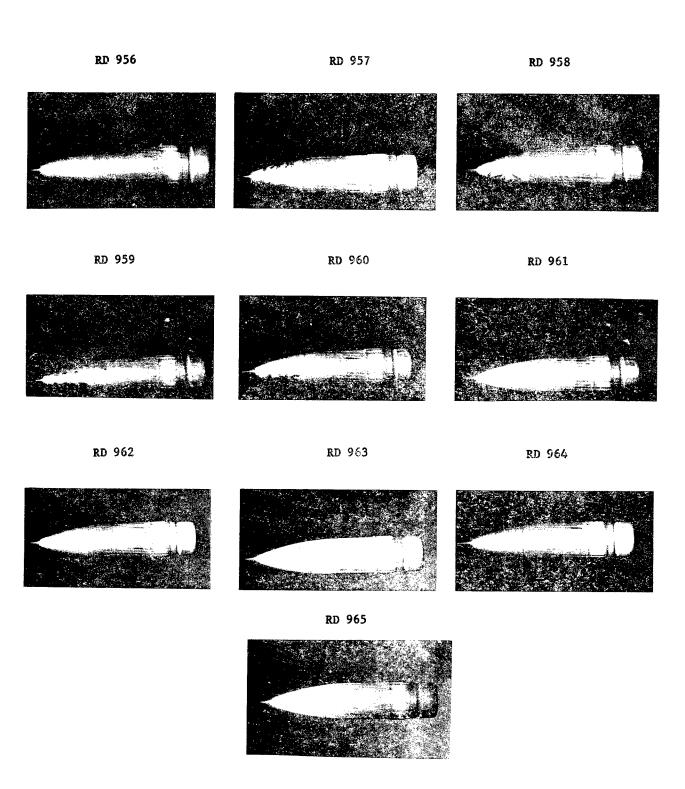


FIGURE 17
M139 Gun Ammo, Plastic Band, 160°F, Photographs

RD 997

RD 999

RD 1000



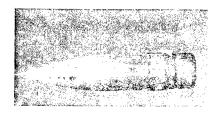




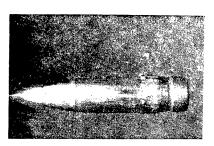
RD 1001

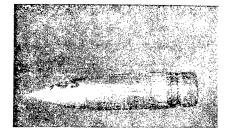
RD 1003





RD 1005





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